

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 976

By Norris

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Sydney Mayo Bender of Shelby County upon being named 2006 Tennessee PTA Outstanding Principal.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those outstanding professionals who have dedicated their careers to providing the highest quality education for Tennessee's students; and

WHEREAS, Sydney Mayo Bender is most assuredly one such superlative professional who, after serving with distinction as principal at Tara Oaks Elementary School in Collierville, Tennessee, for the past eleven years, has been recognized as the 2006 Tennessee PTA Outstanding Principal; and

WHEREAS, an educator for more than thirty years, Mrs. Bender's love for education was passed down from her mother and an aunt, who each taught in Shelby County for more than thirty-five years; her sister and Collierville resident, Anne Dunn, also was a teacher in Shelby County and Memphis for more than thirty years; and

WHEREAS, Sydney Bender opened Tara Oaks eleven years ago, and before that she was principal of Arlington Elementary for three years; she was also assistant principal at Ellendale Elementary in Bartlett, where she internalized the philosophy of her principal and mentor, Jim Jonakin: "Children don't care what you know until they know how much you care."; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Bender is described as the star quarterback of Team Tara Oaks with the PTA Board members as her cheerleaders, encouraging parental involvement in the welcoming environment the principal has created; she is active at every PTA event and has

ridden a bicycle through the halls, been pulled in a little red wagon, and dressed in full football uniform to show her support for PTA membership drives; and

WHEREAS, programs that Mrs. Bender has implemented and supports include Leadership Tara Oaks, formed this year to teach children to be positive role models; she also works with the school's guidance counselors to provide evening programs for parents on informative topics such as bullying, ADHD, and homework tips to help parents with raising children in a rapidly changing world; and

WHEREAS, her professional accomplishments notwithstanding, Sydney Bender is most grateful for the love and support of her husband, Roger; they have been blessed with a daughter, Jessica; her husband, Daniel; and a precious two-year-old grandson, Zach; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Bender is an extremely talented and compassionate administrator who has worked assiduously to motivate her students to reach their full potential, both as scholars and as citizens; she serves as an inspiration to her colleagues and students alike, and her friendship and counsel are highly valued by those who are fortunate to know her; and

WHEREAS, Sydney Bender truly epitomizes the dedicated principal who is wholly committed to the highest ideals of public service and quality education for her students, and she should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Sydney Mayo Bender for her generous dedication to her students and her community, congratulate her upon being named 2006 Tennessee PTA Outstanding Principal, and offer our heartfelt wishes for every continued success in her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.